



North Shore Christian School

Collaborative Critical Thinking

Research has persuaded educators that when a combination of rigorous academics is coupled with explicitly taught thinking skills, and when these thinking skills are also embedded within content, it will produce students who are well learned and who will be able to make valuable and relevant contributions in the 21st Century.

NSCS is thrilled to be in our third year of utilizing an integrated critical thinking frameworks in all our grades and across all content areas. It is not a curriculum, but runs concurrent with our existing curriculum. Think of it as the foundational element in which all other learning securely sits upon.

Why does NSCS value this type of instruction? Again, research has informed our thinking that when children begin at a very young age, and are provided with a multitude of years in which critical thinking is taught, they will become deep thinkers who are confident and self-motivated learners.

Not only will these frameworks help students think deeply, they will also empower our students to think sensitively and respectfully as they share their views, ideas, and convictions. It is our desire for students to leave NSCS *ready to give an answer to anyone who asks the reason for the hope that lies within them* (1 Peter 3:15) - and we are excited for the opportunity to help equip this generation to be a bold and articulate ambassador for Christ!

A bit of History: Four years ago a former teacher of NSCS approached our Education Committee. Dr. Donna Robinson was researching critical thinking and the effects of explicitly taught methods of critical thinking on young children. Her findings were undeniably positive and ignited a passion within her to research more, write more, train more teachers, and get the word out. Working closely with one of her Gordon College students at the time, Julie Lenocker, a shared dream was given legs and the journey to developing frameworks of CCT (*Collaborative Critical Thinking*) began to take shape. For two years NSCS worked closely with Donna and Julie as they piloted their frameworks at NSCS and worked closely with the teachers and administrators. This dream is now a reality as NSCS received the *Critical Thinking Frameworks for Preschool-8th Grades*, as a direct result of Donna and Julie's efforts. Donna and Julie had the privilege of presenting their frameworks at Harvard University in 2017, as well as at *Association of Christian Schools International* the past several years. Additionally, their documentary was shown at Gordon College last winter. Our students and teachers have been the recipients of Donna and Julie's diligent and careful work, and are reaping the rich benefits!